



DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT
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Honorable Mayor and Members of the Common Council

RE: West Allis Skate Park Site Selection Process

The initial, internal planning stages for the West Allis Skate Park determined a series of criteria for selecting a preferred location. Based on density and potential users, the park was identified to be an east-side improvement, so space (7,000 – 10,000 sq. ft.) east of S. 84th St. was preferred. At least 16 sites were reviewed for further consideration. Since the park was to be funded partly with federal CDBG funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, the project had to take place within an existing CDBG eligible project area, serving a primarily low-to-moderate income area of the City. Existing city-owned land was also preferred, since money for acquisition and/or time for negotiating was not available. (These requirements eliminated McCarty Park and school-owned properties.) Working with the advice of consultants and based on this initial narrowing process, Liberty Heights, Veterans' Park, Radtke Park, Klentz Park and Kopperud Park were identified as potential sites.

After reaching out to several national skate park consultants, additional criteria for selecting a site between these locations was determined. Consultants emphasized that visibility (for attractivity and monitoring), and minimizing conflicts both within the park and the neighborhood were key components to successful skate parks. Since children, teenagers and young adults are most likely the primary users, pedestrian, bicycle and mass transit accessibility was preferred. Lastly, it was also hoped that the park could be located centrally within West Allis to give West Allis residents the best opportunity to claim this unique amenity.

Klentz Park

While Klentz Park had the appropriate size for a skate park, its location within a strictly residential neighborhood posed potential conflicts. It was also not very visible nor accessible directly via bike or mass transit routes.

Kopperud Park

Kopperud Park is accessible, visible and had the appropriate amount of space for the skate park. However, it is located adjacent to residential properties, which might have caused conflict. One of the primary detriments to Kopperud Park was its location on the edge of West Allis. It was felt that since the City was involved with funding the improvement, it should have greatest impact on the City and being located on the periphery was not preferred.

Liberty Heights

Liberty Heights is nearby well-traveled roads with pedestrian, bike and transit access; however, it is ultimately tucked within residential area. The park is highly active and has little remaining space of un-programmed land. Ultimately, Liberty Heights made the short list of potential spaces, but there was hesitation to add more features within the park and stretch the tolerance of park users and the residential neighborhood.

Veterans' Park

Veterans' Park had prime visibility and access. It also had minimal conflict with residential users. However, the proximity to the veteran's memorial and limited park space cautioned further thoughts on developing a skate park within the available space. The open green space in the middle of the park is used for concerts and events and was not available for the skate park. It would've needed to be squeezed on the very southern

edge of the park and require the removal of all existing trees and signage. Concerns articulated by Veterans organizations that skaters might desecrate the Veteran's memorial were also taken into consideration.

Radtke Park

Radtke Park is located at a highly visible and accessible intersection. The park is currently un-programmed and underutilized for much of the year. Residential conflicts were felt to be minimal. It is also very centrally located within the City.

Based on the above process and reasoning, and in-person consultation with the City's Skate Park designer, Radtke Park was ultimately chosen by city staff to recommend to the Mayor and Common Council for moving forward with preliminary designs for public review.

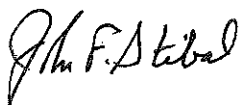
In July and August, Spohn Ranch, the selected Skate Park designers, designed a preliminary layout for a Skate Park in West Allis to receive input on content from local skaters. These designs were first presented at National Night Out. Upon the release of those designs, a handful of comments were raised about the preliminary site selection of Radtke Park. Those concerns primarily related to the unconventional intersection of W. National Ave. and S. 84th St. Over the years this intersection has received various upgrades to assist traffic flow and increase pedestrian safety. Most recently, in 2011, the City aligned crosswalks, increased the pedestrian refuge space, installed new pedestrian ramps and installed significantly more pavement markings on the roadway.

Based on raised concerns, the City also asked the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to look into the pedestrian nature of the intersection. In reviewing provided documents and upon a field inspection, the WisDOT confirmed that the curb ramps and median openings are at appropriate locations and are aligned well. They indicated that additional pedestrian warning signage might help, but since there is already a lot going on at that intersection, that might not necessarily be an answer. WisDOT did not speak specifically to Sight Stopping Distance (SSD) or Intersection Sight Design (ISD). Those issues would likely require more than an informal study and WisDOT has not responded to that specific request.

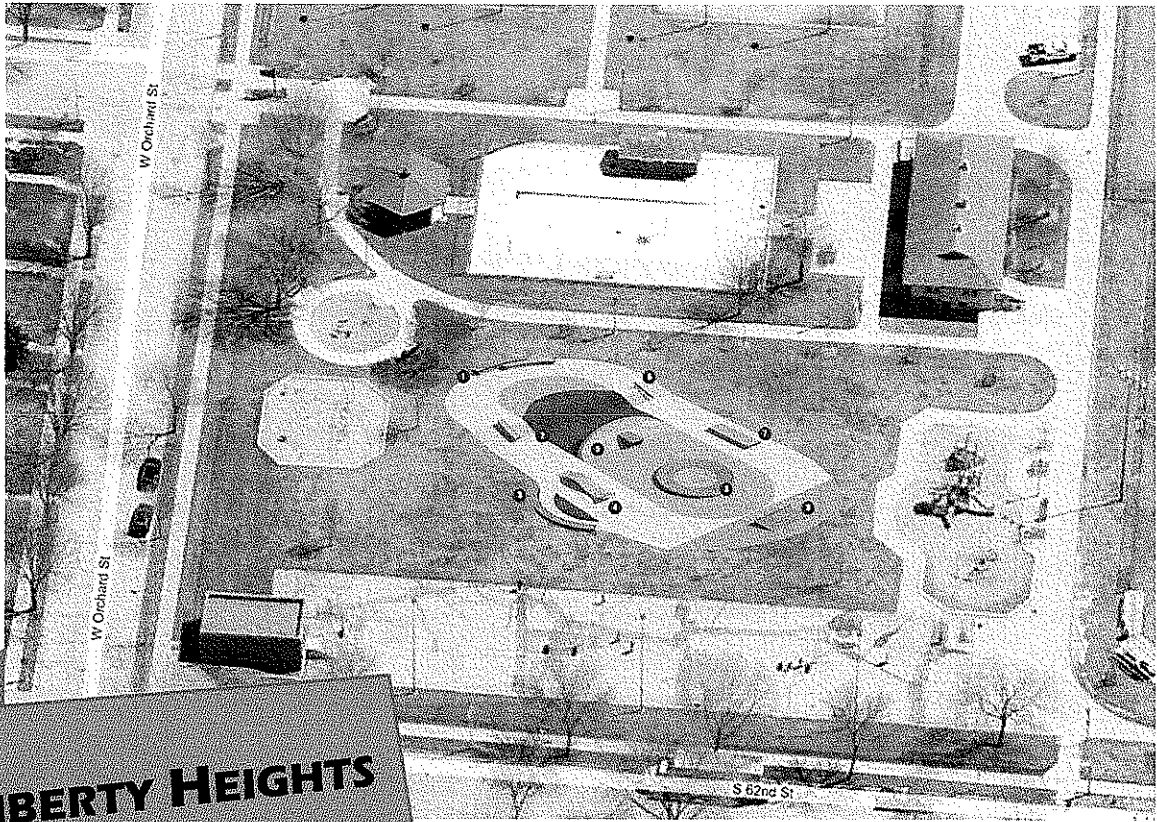
The City acknowledges that this intersection is unique. However, city staff in the Engineering and Development Departments, as well as the skate park consultant, believe that familiarity with the pre-existing nature and recent upgrades leading to the current configuration of this intersection should not deter the construction of a skate park within Radtke Park. If further study determines that upgrades are required at this intersection, regardless of whether or not a skate park is developed within the park, the City should then look more into those improvements. Suggestions range from brush clearing, additional signage and flashing beacons to improved signals.

The Department of Development recommends that the Skate Park be developed at Radtke Park and that continuous evaluation of pedestrian safety at this intersection, and throughout the city, be carried out routinely and upgrades implemented in like manner.

Sincerely,



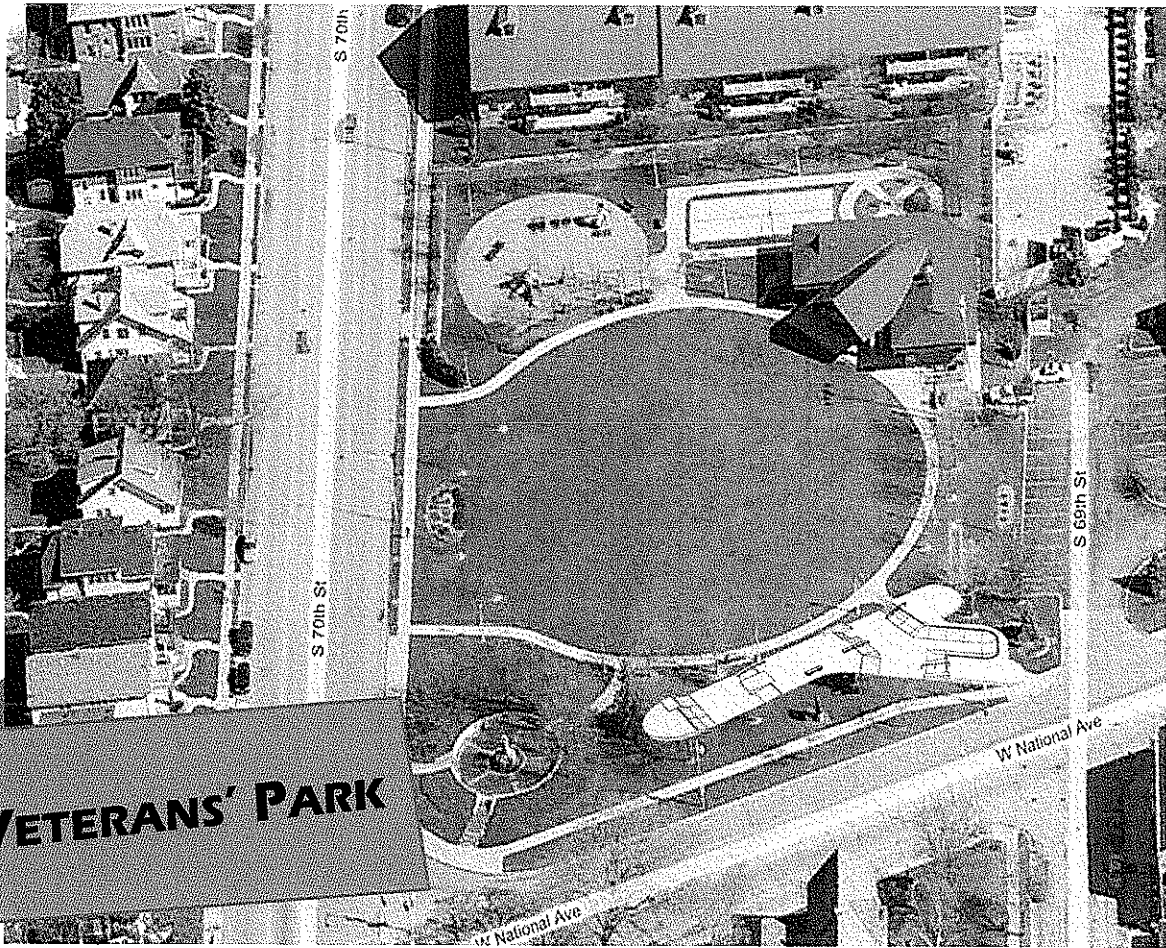
John F. Stibal
Director of Development



LIBERTY HEIGHTS



KOPPERUD PARK

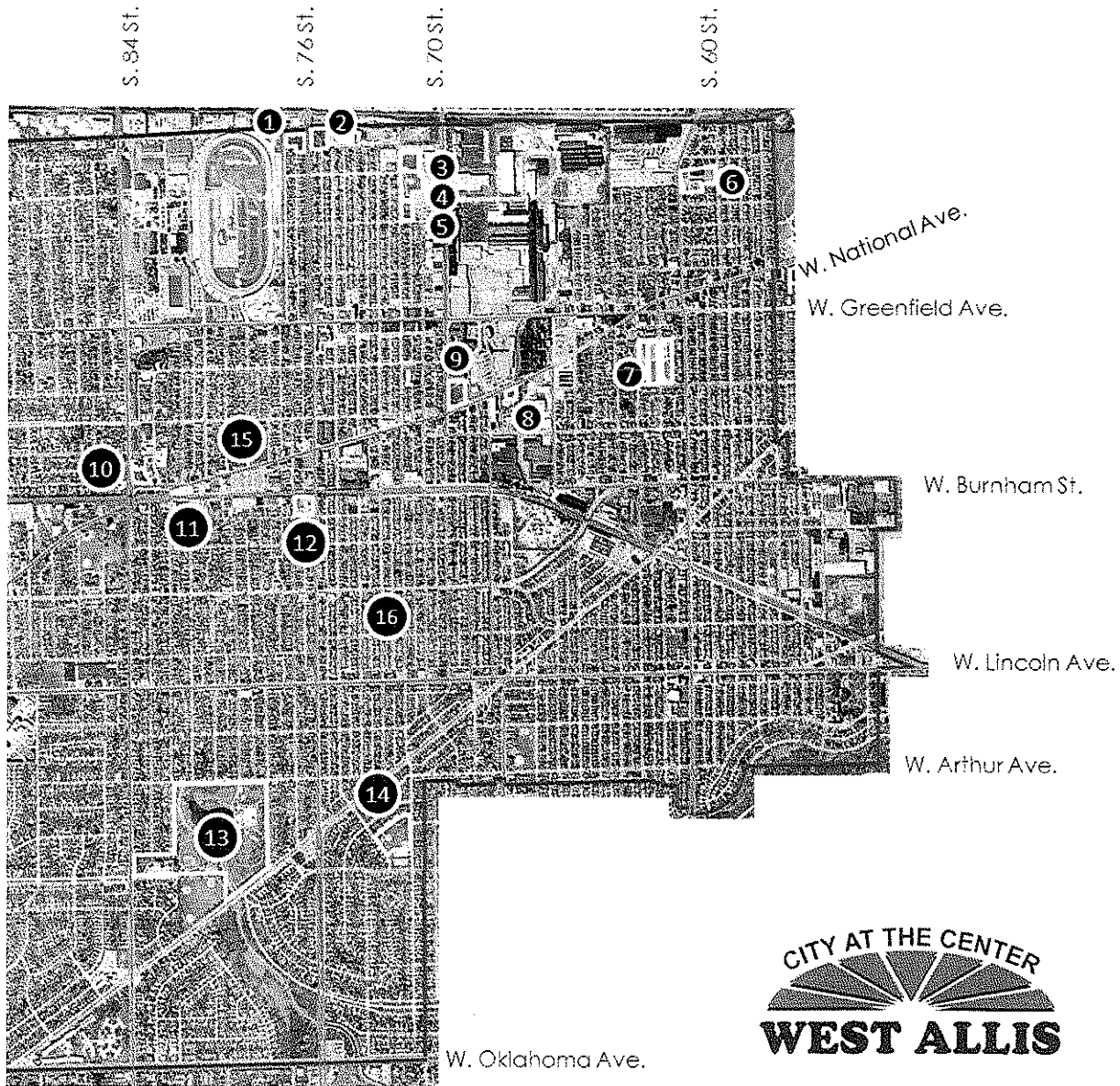


VETERANS' PARK



RADTKE PARK

SPOHN RANCH
Skate parks



Potential Skate Plaza Locations

1. Kopperud Park (west)
2. Kopperud Park (east)
3. 72nd and Walker (baseball field)
4. McKinley Park (north)
5. McKinley Park (south)
6. Roosevelt School
7. Liberty Heights
8. 6737 W. National Ave. (former Perfect Screw)
9. Veteran's Park
10. Radtke Park
11. 82nd and National
12. 76th and Hicks
13. McCarty Park
14. Klentz Park
15. Lincoln School
16. Jefferson School

CDBG Project Area Map

